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jesting altercation about their mythologically founded bonds of mutual coercion. Ta'aŋ, the Gbizug tɛndaana's brother, who often deputizes for him in public ceremonies, has a sharp tongue. When representatives of the tɛndaana and of the Chief of Tongo have to perform some ceremony together he always pretends to mock the Namoos. 'You are only guests here,' he jeers (referring to their immigrant origin), 'I (as representative of Gbizug) have given you land to sit on, but if you don't behave I'll drive you back to Mampurugu, where you came from.' The Tongo men laugh good-humouredly at this sally, and one of them might answer, 'Very true, but if we should decide to go back to Mampurugu and leave you to yourselves, you will just starve'—the reference being to the Chief of Tongo's ritual power over the rain. Elders of Kpata'ar and Gundaat, which have a similar politico-ritual relationship to that of Tongo and Gbizug, often tease one another in the same way when they meet to perform a ceremony together.

Tallensi say this is just fun, jesting (*koohɔg*); but we see again that this apparently spontaneous jesting acts as a means of reconciling and counteracting the tensions of a double-edged social relationship. Where two corporate groups are structurally divided from each other to the point of having potentially competitive interests likely to lead to conflict at one level of the social organization, but are at the same time bound to each other by strong ties of obligatory co-operation and goodwill in another aspect of their social relations, the undercurrent of hostility or mutual wariness is deflected by a jest. You jest with people who must be friendly to you in terms of one set of loyalties and may be hostile to you in terms of another, and with whom you are on an equal footing as far as mutual rights and duties go. In the social relations of individuals with one another, this configuration occurs between siblings-in-law; hence the notion that the joking relationship between corporate units is modelled on *dakiiyɛt*, the relationship of siblings-in-law.

Privileged Moral Coercion

There is another peculiar tie belonging to the category of social relations which we have been discussing. So far as my information goes, it is also confined to the Talis and their congeners. Its moral aspect is of particular interest as a clue to the values that lie at the back of the basic principles of Talis social structure.

The natives have no name for this relationship. In virtue of it, pairs of clans or lineages usually on the margin of the field of clanship of each, but not joking partners, have the privilege of moral coercion over each other's members. The natives describe this as a taboo (*kihɛr*). No member of one group may refuse a request of any member of the other. 'They *dare not* refuse', one informant declared, with obvious solemnity, as if to emphasize that it was a question of deep moral values. 'If they don't give what we ask, they would die, their house (i.e. lineage) would fall to pieces (*bɛ yiri gbi'irmɛ*).' In other words, if anyone violates this bond, not only he but his entire line of descent would perish—the most calamitous retribution conceivable to the natives and one which befalls only those who transgress the ultimate tenets of religion and ethics.

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571 Hence, people connected in this way are careful not to ask each other
577 for things. In the hunt, if a member of one group kills an animal and any members of the other group happen to be on the spot, the slayer will not lay a hand on the kill until the latter have cut a portion for themselves.

765 Sometimes it happens that a great tragedy overwhelms a member of
571 one group and he abandons himself to grief, refusing food, drink, and
577 consolation. Then, as a last resort, his relatives send for the head of the lineage whose requests cannot be refused, to persuade the stricken man to face life again. This happened, for example, when Puyɛl of Wakii's child was accidentally burnt to death. He was prostrate with grief, and said that he wished to die. Thereupon his brothers sent for the Bɔyarna'ab of Gundaat, the clan to whose members Puyɛl's lineage must yield, and the Bɔyarna'ab persuaded him to accept food and water, a sign that he was ready to throw off his despair. 'It is a matter of our fathers and our ancestors', the Bɔyarna'ab declared when he told the story. 'He dare not refuse; I would call on the Earth, and my *bɔyar*, and our ancestors, to witness, and his house would be destroyed if he remained obstinate.' Elders of other Talis clans explained the inviolability of this bond in almost the same words. It rests upon religious sanctions, the cult of the Earth and the cult of the External *Bɔyar*, common to all the Talis.

The Rationalization of Clanship Ties

811 Tallensi have no explanation to offer for the joking partnership or the bond of privileged moral coercion between clans or lineages, though they regard them as being somehow connected with the network of clanship. 'It is a matter of our fathers and forefathers', is all that even the best informed elders have to say about these ties.

*618 Clanship ties, however, always have the warrant of dogma or myth, as
811 we have seen. It is worth while examining a few more instances.

Sometimes common agnatic ancestry is claimed, though no common ancestor can be cited by name or any point of convergence of the different genealogies suggested. This is the case with Yinduuri and Sii, for instance. Frequently the fiction of a cognatic link is used. Thus, in explanation of the clanship ties existing between Degal and Kpata'arna'ab yidɛm of Kpata'ar, it is said that the latter are the sororal nephews (*akɔɔ*) of the former. The name of the Degal woman who is thus alleged to have been the progenitrix of the Kpata'ar lineage is unknown, and no Kpata'ar man would even speculate as to which of their ancestors might have been her husband. Similarly, Dakuor yidɛm of Bunkiuk are said to be the descendants of a sororal nephew of Kpata'arna'ab yidɛm with whom they have ties of clanship. The fictional character of this formula is revealed when we compare the neighbouring clan of Samiit. The people of Samiit say that their founding ancestor was a Wakii man (hence their ties of clanship with Wakii), who migrated to the top of the hills because he had by accident killed and eaten a python, which is a taboo at Wakii. After wandering about for some time, he found refuge with the people of Gundaat, one of whose daughters was later given to him as a wife. The people of Samiit are the posterity (*tu'a*) of this pair. Strictly speaking, therefore, the people of Samiit are the sororal nephews of Gundaat; and

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might have been his mother's if she were a man. In practice sororal nephews are rarely allowed to assert this right, and then only if their cognatic link with their maternal uncle's clan is not more than about four generations back.

Though the *pɔɣayabəlis* of a lineage or clan never act together as a single group, since marriage disperses them among other clans, they are often thought of as forming a united body, the feminine counterpart of the men of the clan. This is seen most conspicuously in funeral ceremonies; and we can easily understand why, if we remember that funeral ceremonies are the concern of the whole clan. We have made a passing reference to the role of *pɔɣayabəlis* in funeral ceremonies, but it deserves some amplification. For it is in funeral ceremonies that one constantly hears 'the *pɔɣayabəlis*' spoken of as if they were a regular, organized group, sees them called upon to undertake tasks in a purely representative capacity, and observes the allocation of prescribed portions of food to them as of right.

Naturally, this is most noticeable at the funeral of an important member of the lineage or the wife of a lineage elder. Large quantities of beer and food have to be prepared for distribution at various times during the ceremony, and this is the work of the women. All the women assisting in the work at the 'house of the funeral' (*koor yiri*) are divided into two groups, in a way which shows clearly the division of the women in whom a lineage or clan has jural and moral interests, into those who belong to the clan by birth and those who are married into it. The *pɔɣayabəlis* form one group. They have separate cooking quarters, and special tasks. The other group consists of the *dubɛnib*, 'those who stay in the room'. They are the clanswomen of the wives of the bereaved house, who are themselves wives of other members of the clan or of nearby linked lineages or allied clans. They may include the *pɔɣayabəlis* of several clans, except, of course, those of the clan celebrating the funeral. They, too, have their own cooking quarters and special duties and privileges. They are called *dubɛnib* (from *dug*, room, and *bɛ*, to stay or be) because they are identified with the *dugdɛm*, the 'mistresses of the rooms', that is, the wives of the bereaved clan who are their clan sisters. Their principal task is to remain indoors with their clan sisters in order to attend to their needs, to console them, and to help them in the duties that would fall upon wives in this situation. Clan sisterhood sometimes has a very wide connotation in these circumstances. There are many Wakii women married to Tongo men. If one of them requires the help of her clan sisters as *dubɛnib*, those of them who live nearest to her or are most closely related to her will be the first to come, and her distant clan sisters will probably not come at all. On the other hand, there are very few women of Hill Talis clans married to men at Duusi. So if one of them needs the help of *dubɛnib* she will call on all the women of Hill Talis clans at Duusi and in neighbouring settlements. In such a case the solidarity of clanship merges with that of locality and of common values. This principle is carried so far that if a Gore woman married to a Tɛnzugu man requires the help of *dubɛnib*, she calls upon all the other Gore wives, of whom there are very few, of Tɛnzugu and of immediately adjacent clans, whatever part of Goreland

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764 they may come from. For these women feel themselves to be as closely
571 akin to one another as members of the same clan, by contraposition with
562 the Tallensi whom they have married.

The *pɔyayabəlis* act together as a single group under the leadership of
764 the oldest among them at funeral ceremonies. The young girls perform
571 such tasks as bringing in the great bundles of firewood required for
562 cooking the beer. The older *pɔyayabəlis*, expert in the preparation of
252 beer, undertake that task themselves. The younger women do the more strenuous jobs connected with cooking, such as grinding flour and preparing the other ingredients of a meal. The older women cook the porridge and meat relishes required for such rites as the setting out of consecrated food for the dead. All food required for ritual use is prepared by the *pɔyayabəlis*, since all the ritual is the preserve of the clan. As members of the clan they can be associated with the ritual activities of the clan, and as women they can carry out tasks which are appropriate to their sex in accordance with the usual division of labour. The *dubɛnib* do not prepare the food required for ritual purposes, but only the food used to give hospitality to clansmen, kinsmen, and other visitors.

764 The *pɔyayabəlis* have also to be directly represented by one of them,
571 most appropriately by one of the older women, in many of the rites.
562 A *pɔyayabələg* has to assist in such rites as the offering of the initial sacrifices to the spirit of the departed and to the ancestors he or she is about
[252] to join. A *pɔyayabələg* and a man of the clan see to the ritual feeding of the orphans, which takes place at different stages of the ceremonies. The various mourning strings (*miis*) which the orphans and widows have to wear during the funeral ceremonies are tied on, and at the end removed, by an elderly *pɔyayabələg*. The setting out of consecrated food for the dead is always done by one male and one female member of the clan. And then, when the final divination takes place, a man and a woman of the lineage together carry out the simple rite of restoring the dead person's body dirt (*dayat*), the symbol of his individual self, to the house where his life was spent, and whither he now returns as a spirit to whom sacrifice must be offered.

×618 Lastly, a married *pɔyayabələg* is a link between her paternal clan and
728 her husband's clan, both in herself and in the line of descent which
584 springs from her. This is evident nowadays from the role of the *pɔyasama* —a clansman of the bridegroom and a matrilateral kinsman of the bride's lineage—as an intermediary in marriage negotiations. It was shown in former days in peace-making ceremonies. If two clans, or groups of clans, had been at war, peace was concluded by a ritual reconciliation. In this the opponents were usually represented by a *pɔyayabələg* of each side who was married to a member of the other side, who was therefore bound by rural and moral ties to both sides and had strong emotional attachments to both, and thus symbolized the underlying interdependence of the opponents.

613 Lineage and clan consist of both their male and their female members.
562 Though the women do not contribute to the continuity and perpetuation
602 of the lineage, they are a source of strength to it. This is most obvious in the fact that the bride-price paid for them adds to the resources by

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PLATE VIII

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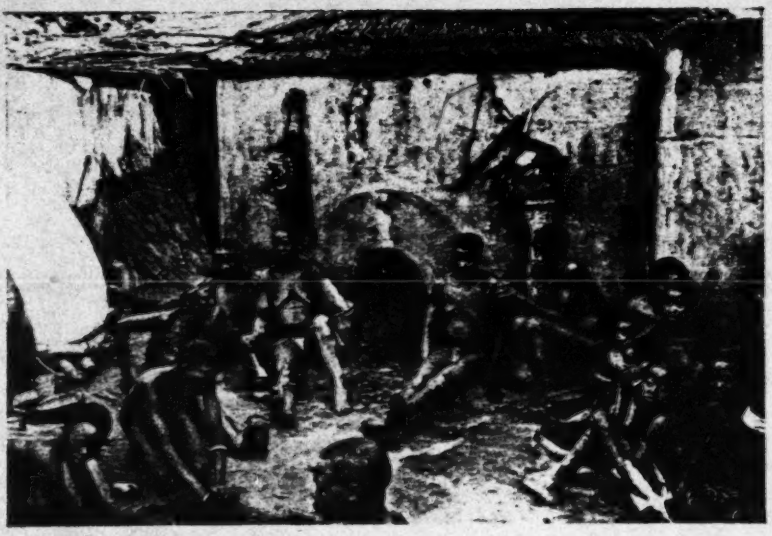

(*a*) The solidarity of clan sisters. During the funeral of the family head clan sisters of the widows, who have married into the same or adjacent clans, come to sit with them and console them.

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(*b*) One of the senior clan-sisters (*pɔyayabɔlis*) of the deceased supervises the cooking of the beer for his funeral rites.

[facing p. 161]

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of politico-ritual unity and solidarity existing between the three clans. To give up land to them is, therefore, an act of virtue that creates yet closer mutual bonds.

The four sections of Tongo are not marked off from one another by territorial boundaries. But each is more or less concentrated in one locality, forming a more or less exclusive local unit, looked at from within. Members of one section are not found living right in the middle of another section. In theory they are at liberty to do so. In practice they would find it impossible, owing partly to the absence of unowned land at Tongo, but mainly to the pull of lineage loyalties. For the territorial segmentation of Tongo is a function of its precise and definitive lineage segmentation; a section is the local framework of a lineage segment. By the lineage criterion the sections are relatively autonomous units within the limits set by their common descent, but they are held together in a remarkably stable social equilibrium by their common interests. This has a counterpart in their territorial relations, which show them to have reached a stable ecological equilibrium *inter se*. The area occupied by each section is now finally fixed in location and more or less fixed in extent. Where any of them has expanded in the last three or four generations it has been chiefly at the expense of Zubiuŋ and Gbizug, not of another Tongo section. Thus, as in the case of composite clans, a social boundary exists between one section of Tongo and another. There is more intimate and regular daily intercourse, more mutual aid, closer and more binding moral, jural, and ceremonial bonds, between the members of a section, both children and adults, and between their wives, than between them and members, or wives of members, of another section. There are latent hostilities and hence a greater probability of dissension between sections than within sections. Thus they have a competitive orientation towards one another where some common interests, like the chiefship, are concerned.

Territorial Distribution and the Tɛŋ in its Mystical Aspect

As with many other Tale settlements, there is no relation between the territorial distribution of the people of Tongo and the distribution of ritual jurisdiction over the land on which they live. This was the point emphasized by the Yinduurna'ab in the case previously quoted. Tongo stretches over the ritual domains of several tɛndaanas. Guŋ proper lies on the outskirts of the Gbeog tɛndaana's *tɛŋ*; most of Puhug is on the Gbizug tɛndaana's ritual territory; Kuorəg is on land under the ritual jurisdiction of the Soog Yikpɛmdaan; Seug partly on Zoo *tɛŋ* and partly on Zubiuŋ *tɛŋ*, Dekpieŋ mostly on Zubiuŋ *tɛŋ*.

The bearing of this on the internal structure of Tongo is only indirect. The section or part of a section dwelling on a particular tɛndaana's *tɛŋ* and thus coming within the scope of his ritual powers has closer ties of neighbourliness and of affinal and cognatic kinship with that tɛndaana's clan than other sections have. Differences in the local taboos of the Earth (*tɛŋɔn kiha*) observed by the people of Tongo symbolize these ties. For example, a red pot must be left on a new grave at Kuorəg, because this is a taboo of Soog *tɛŋ*. Elsewhere in Tongo this is not done. Soog elders and youths always take part in the festive phases of a Kuorəg funeral, in a

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sunzɔt (division into brother (patri-) segments)', he said, 'but we shall eventually do so. Our line of descent has not yet gone far enough, for we are all the children of one woman (i.e. the descendants of a common progenitrix not very far back). A woman's offspring do not split up, it is a man's offspring that split (*Bumpɔk dɔŋam pu bɔkɔra, buraa dɔŋam m-bɔkɔt*).' In fact, Gundaatdem form a lineage of rather narrow span considering the number of ascendant generations which they reckon to their founding ancestor.

Incidentally the Bɔŋarna'ab's statement brings out vividly the native conception of a lineage as a perpetual entity, 'going on (*kyɛŋ sa*)' for ever, unitary and identical beneath the surface of its changing personnel, the 'children of one woman (or one man)' as long as it lasts.

According to this scheme, in the set of lineages we have been analysing, Nɔpugzabɔr yidem, the agnatic descendants of Nɔpugzabɔr, constitute one of the five *dugɔt* of the *yir*, Lɛbhtiis yidaan, which in turn is a *dug* of the section (*yizug*) of Puhug, and this in its turn is a *dug* of the sub-clan of Tongo. Nɔpugzabɔr yir, again, may in certain situations be regarded as consisting of two *dugɔt*, Yidaan biis and Zoobɔŋ biis; and as Tɔbɔg and Dɔbil are *soog* brothers, their agnatic descendants will form a single matricentral segment, with greater cohesion than Yidaan biis.

Though *dug* and *yir* are relative concepts—relative both to each other and to the particular situation in which a given order of lineage segmentation is critical—there is a sense in which *dug* has a more precise connotation. As usual in Tale social organization no rigorous criterion can be found for this. It can be defined only in dynamic terms. Tallensi tend to think of the field of lineage relations as made up of three broad zones: the zone of clanship,[1] as when a man says, 'I am a Tongo man'; within this zone, the zone of section (*yizug*) relations, as when a Tongo man says, 'I am a Puhug man'; and within this zone, the zone of *dug* relations, which lies between the limits of the major segment of the *yizug* to which the individual belongs, on the one hand, and a level of segmentation of about the order of Doohraan yidem—that is, with a common ancestor placed about five generations back, on the other. Thus, if a man says of another member of his clan, 'We are *dugdem* (members of the same *dug*)', one can infer that he is thinking of a lineage segment of an order between that of Doohraan yidem and that of Lɛbhtiis yidem of Tɔŋ-Puhug, though the exact genealogical extension of the lineage intended will vary from clan to clan.

This notion of the *dug*, to which we have given a purely morphological formulation, is a reflex of the configuration of social interests that regulate the corporate functions of the lineage. The zone of clanship is correlated with interclan and intersettlement political and ritual relations, and with the maximum extension of the rule of exogamy. The zone of *yizug* relations is correlated with intra-clan political and ritual relations, with the aliquot distribution between segments of the clan of rights to politico-ritual offices, and with the complementary rights and duties of the major segments of the clan, upon which the maintenance of its structural equilibrium depends. The zone of *dug* relations corresponds to a field

[1] Cf. Chapter IV.

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571 of closer common interests. It is related to the *yizug* as the *yizug* is to the
613 clan. At the limit it marks off the widest lineage within which there is a strong feeling of moral solidarity, a tendency for corporate unity to prevail in all circumstances, and a strong sense of undivided common interests. Beyond this range, in the zone of section relations and in that of clanship, corporate unity and solidarity tend to be a function of politico-ritual interdependence and of a balance between the competitive interests and the obligatory bonds of reciprocity of the major segments of the clan.

582 At Tongo the widest range of the *dug* in this definitive sense is a lineage
613 segment of the order of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm. This is constantly shown in economic life, as when a man invites his neighbours to a collective hoeing party or to help him build a new house. Then all the members of his widest *dug* feel bound to turn out, but not members of other *dugət* of the same section. Members of other sections will not be asked to come at all, and if one or two turn out it will be because they have personal ties of matrilateral kinship with the man issuing the invitation. It appears similarly in all other concerns of the individual which require corporate support. It is shown in the incidence of marriage prohibitions. Tallensi may not, according to strict rule, marry cognatic kin of any degree whatsoever. A man may not marry a daughter of his maternal uncle's lineage (*ahəb yiri*). But the restriction is limited to his mother's widest paternal *dug*. Thus a man whose mother belongs to Lɛbhtiis yidɛm of Tɔŋ-Puhug would not be allowed to marry another daughter of this *dug*, but he can—and innumerable cases show that this often happens—marry a daughter of another *dug* of Puhug.

613 Dissension occurs between segments of such a *dug* now and then, but
[578] this arouses severe reprobation. Members of the *dug* feel it as a direct threat to their well-being, in a way that they do not feel conflict between such *dugət* to be; they feel it as verging on the sinful, challenging the wrath of the ancestor spirits, whereas conflict between such *dugət* or between sections, though morally reprehensible, is not mystically dangerous. Within this *dug* sexual relations between a member and the wife of
[835] one of his agnates are branded as incest, and produce a serious if not
[837] irreparable rupture in the unit; and sexual relations between classificatory brother and sister meet with strong censure. Beyond this range sexual relations between a man and the wife of a clansman are merely adulterous, a violation of clan solidarity, not a sin; and intercourse with a clan sister is not censured. These distinctions go back to one fundamental principle. The wide *dug* marks the widest range within which differences of generation and birth order are recognized for jural and ritual purposes; beyond that range these differences are not recognized. The lower limit of the *dug* corresponds to a segment of about the order of Doohraan yidɛm. This narrow *dug* frequently forms the core of an expanded family; it determines the widest field within which domestic relations prevail. Its members have differentiated person-to-person relations, based on the recognition of generation differences and proxy-parenthood, as well as corporate lineage relations. Their moral bonds are correspondingly stronger than in the wide *dug*, though of the same kind. Within this unit sexual intercourse with a sister arouses very strong reprobation, and

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where it always and necessarily brings together men of the same descent group, bound together not only by ties of blood but also by ties of residence, common interests, and common experience. The local concentration of the lineage in such close association with the graves of its ancestors and the land hallowed by their life and labour gives to the cult of the ancestors a binding power and directive force in the social life of the natives which is hardly equalled elsewhere in Africa. The like-mindedness, common values, mutual loyalties, sense of unity and continuity, so prominent in a lineage of small span and distinctive only to a lesser degree in lineages of greater span, can be translated directly into terms of contact, co-operation, and experience. So also the conflicts and rivalries that inevitably spring up in a human community, and occur as often in a Tale settlement as anywhere else in the world, have an additional significance, since they necessarily involve men who are kin to one another and belong to the same corporate unit. The principle of lineage representation and the concept of the equivalence of members of the same lineage have the maximum efficacy in these conditions.

The effect of the congruence between lineage ties and local ties is of no less importance for a woman than for a man. In childhood her closest playmates are the children of her father's inner lineage, that is, the children of her father's nearest neighbours, and their principal playground is the immediate vicinity of their parents' homesteads. Among her classificatory patrilineal relatives she knows best and depends most on the members of her father's inner lineage. Members of her father's medial lineage are next in order of importance for her, and more distant clansmen and clanswomen least important, though far from irrelevant. When she marries into another community she does not cease to belong to her natal clan. She maintains close ties with it, the most intimate being with the members of her father's inner lineage; and she thinks of these ties as ties with a corporate social unit, not with particular individuals only. Both to herself, her husband and his clansmen, and to her children, her 'father's house' (*ba yir*) is, in the broadest sense, her natal clan pictured as a local community, in a narrower sense, her father's medial lineage, thought of as a localized subdivision of her natal clan, in the narrowest sense her father's inner lineage thought of in the same way.

In her husband's home, too, the correlation of lineage proximity with local proximity enters continuously into the routine of her life. Her relations with the members of her husband's clan are graded in accordance with their lineage proximity to him. The men of her husband's clan with whom she has closest contact are her husband's nearest agnates and the nearest neighbours of her conjugal family. With him they form the segment of his clan which has the greatest jural interest in her and her children. If her husband dies, it is one of these men who is most likely to inherit her. The wives of all her husband's clansmen are nominally her co-wives or daughters-in-law; but in fact it is only the wives of his close agnates, women who are her nearest neighbours, whom she regards as effective classificatory co-wives and daughters-in-law. She and they will help one another in such tasks as floor beating or ceremonial cooking, and at critical times like a confinement or a death. She has bonds of

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comradeship with all women married into her husband's clan, owing to their common status as wives of the clan, but this bond is stronger with the wives of her husband's close agnates than with the wives of his distant agnates. It is most effective within the group of families built up round her husband's inner lineage, and becomes purely nominal outside the range of the group of families whose male members form a medial lineage.

Neighbourhood ties are *ipso facto* lineage ties, and therefore economic, religious, jural, and moral ties. The closer a man's neighbourhood ties with another, the more closely are they likely to be related by lineage and the greater are likely to be their common and mutual interests. A man's central field of social relationships is integral with his central field of spatial relationships. His range of physical communication with others is a function of his range of social relations, and is graded, both as to intensity and frequency of communication, in accordance with the gradation of his genealogical relationships. For, as we have previously noted, most men's lives are almost wholly tied to their natal settlements.

This close correlation between genealogical relationships and local relationships operates in the wide sphere of clanship as well as in the narrow sphere of individual conduct, in the corporate relationships of lineages and clans, no less than in the emotional bonds of individuals. We have seen how it emerges in the organization of the lineage, and its enormous importance in a person's relations with his patrilateral kin. It is equally significant in the establishment of affinal ties and in the efficacy of the ties of matrilateral kinship.

In this respect the Tallensi exhibit a feature of primitive society that has often been stressed: their overwhelming dependence on face-to-face communication and association in the organization of their collective life. Among the Tallensi it can be clearly seen that this is conditioned by their mode of economic life, their lack of the art of writing, and the absence of mechanical equipment and sources of power for transport, communications, and other technological purposes. But the student of Tale society cannot avoid the conclusion that social factors, in particular the complex of interrelated elements revealed in the narrow range of political and economic relations, the lack of a centralized political system and the dominance of genealogical connexions in all social relations, are the most important factors in the situation.

The Section

We can return now to our account of the lineage framework of Tongo.

Adjacent to Lɛbhtiis yidɛm, between them and Gbizug, lies the cluster of homesteads of the assimilated lineage of Ligɔr yidɛm (see above, p. 57), homesteads Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, on our map. Lɛbhtiis yidɛm are the authentic lineage with which Ligɔr yidɛm are most closely linked, but they count as segments of equal order in the larger unit of the section (*yizug*). Another cluster of homesteads (Nos. 13, 14, 15, 16) belong to Kunkɔŋto'o yidɛm, the attached lineage reputed to be derived from a divorced sister's son (*tau bii*) of Lɛbhtiis yidɛm. Both these accessory lineages have a number of male members living away from Tongo.

The structure of Puhug (see diagram, p. 212), the section (*yizug*) of which

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This small sample is typical of the relationships that unite neighbours at Datɔk. The settlement is divided up into such clusters of homesteads, numbering anything from four or five homesteads to about a dozen, which have grown up around the homestead of a man who migrated to settle there forty or fifty years ago when Datɔk was still uninhabited bush.

Gradually the original settlers were joined by younger members of their lineages and kinsmen, migrating for economic or psychological reasons but drawn to this particular place by their kinship ties. Often several such clusters of homesteads close to one another, the owners of which are linked among themselves by ties of lineage or kinship, are grouped round men who are themselves linked by lineage or kinship. They are the original settlers, or more usually the sons or grandsons of the original settlers, who built their homesteads far apart from one another so as to have ample land for cultivation close at hand, and then 'cut' (*yma*) parcels of this land for the immigrants who filtered in subsequently.

In these conditions a great deal of intermarriage takes place between neighbours and within the local community, since many different clans are represented in the community. Tallensi are more inclined to marry people who live nearby than to take spouses from a distance; and at Datɔk marriage between the children of men who happen to be neighbours because of their kinship with a third man, but are themselves not related, is very common.[1] This weaves the mesh of kinship ties yet more finely, binding neighbour to neighbour still more closely and firmly.

It is evident that the corporate life of a community like Datɔk—and this applies only in a lesser degree to other peripheral settlements of mixed origins—must differ in many ways from that of the older settlements. Two clans, Gar and Gban, are numerically and politically dominant at Datɔk, just as Zoo is at Biuŋ, and the Hill Talis are at Mɔyaduur, and the people of these numerically superior clans or lineages can co-operate and unite for action in the same way as the segments of the clan do in the old settlements. People who have very few or no clansmen or lineage brothers in the settlement are in a different position. In Tale jural and ceremonial relations all matters of importance are dealt with corporately by lineages. Thus, if a Ba'ari man living at Datɔk suffers a bereavement, takes a wife, marries off a daughter, gets involved in a dispute, or has to make an important sacrifice, he has to call upon the elders of his lineage and clan at Ba'ari to support him in the action required. His extra-clan kinsmen at Datɔk cannot give him corporate assistance, though they would be individually helpful. Similarly he takes part in the economic, jural, and ceremonial events in which his Datɔk neighbours and kinsmen are involved only as an individual actuated by ties of personal kinship and concern for the welfare of particular people. In other words, these outlying settlements are still politically inchoate. They are still mainly social and political apanages of the older settlements from which they have been colonized; very many of their members are still tied into the structure of their natal clan-settlements, and are still

[1] I state this in a general way, as I did not take a sufficiently large sample of marriages at Datɔk to give a numerical indication of the extent of marriage within the settlement.

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
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of Təŋ-Kuorəg. The practical duties of his office were carried out by his sons and other elders of the section. The decrepitude of age does not make a chief or tɛndaana any the less a chief or tɛndaana. The activities of the office are simply taken over by his sons.

Tallensi never undertake anything of importance,—for instance, a marriage transaction or the building of a new shrine or making a new bush farm—without the knowledge of the other members of the medial lineage and without consulting or at least informing the head of their section or maximal lineage. The home of the lineage head is the centre of the social life of the lineage members and their families. There is a constant coming and going of members of the lineage at the lineage head's homestead. There they often congregate in the dry season to gossip or discuss their affairs under his shade tree. Visiting kinsmen and affines of lineage members from other clans usually call to greet him there. This applies especially to the medial lineage but also to maximal lineages and sections in a slightly lesser degree. The lineage head himself, if he is able-bodied, often goes to see other members of the lineage. The bonds of solidarity, mutual interest, and knowledge of one another's affairs are thus constantly being knit together within the lineage.

Though a lineage head has no judicial authority, he is often asked to arbitrate in disputes or conflicts between segments of the lineage. What he generally tries to do is to bring about a compromise and reconciliation, for he has no powers of enforcing his decision. When he is successful in adjusting differences, it is on account of his prestige and because he has the public opinion of the lineage on his side. No lineage head would attempt to adjust a dispute in the lineage without the advice and backing of the other elders of the lineage.

The sanction of a lineage head's position is the ancestor cult. Even a chief has, in the native social order, no judicial or economic sanctions to support his authority. A tɛndaana has, in addition, the sanction of the Earth. The role of the lineage head in corporate affairs, his duties, responsibilities, and privileges all arise from the fact that he has custody of the lineage *bɔyar*. The strength of this sanction depends not only on the natives' belief in the mystical powers of the ancestors but also on the crucial function of the ancestor cult as the ideology around which lineage relations are organized. The cult of the lineage ancestors is the supreme centripetal force in lineage relations. Many men live far away from their lineage homes. They maintain their lineage bonds on account of their dependence on the ancestor cult. Individuals may transgress the norms of lineage unity and amity with apparent impunity. Their death, when it comes, is conceptualized as a punishment from the ancestors and this serves to reaffirm the norms of lineage solidarity.

Because of this, sacrifices to the lineage *bɔyar* form the key mechanism for maintaining lineage cohesion and affirming the status of the lineage head. The first of these sacrifices made by a new lineage head (in a lineage of a high order) when he formally takes over the custody of the *bɔyar* is of outstanding significance. Not less than three or four and sometimes ten to fifteen years elapse between successive ceremonies of this sort. They are occasions of special solemnity marking the re-establishment of

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
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over its destinies just as they controlled its social and economic activities in their lifetime.

A new homestead is erected for preference on the site of a man's father's or other patrilineal ancestor's *daboog*. Such a site is consecrated through having been the scene of human residence in the past, and through the abiding association with it of the ancestors who formerly lived there. If a man builds on virgin land, the site must not only be technically prepared for habitation, it must also be ritually won for human ends. Hence the tendaana under whose ritual jurisdiction the spot falls must first consecrate it, and the new dwelling must be magically protected against those vague personifications of irrational maleficence, mystically dangerous stones (*kubeet*) and trees (*tebees*). So complete is the identification of the family with its dwelling, that if persistent misfortune dogs the family after its removal to a new homestead, and all other ritual measures seem to have failed, the onus is finally thrown on the homestead itself. 'The house has not accepted them (*yir la pu diebame*)', the diviners discover. The whole complex of mystical agencies which endow the house with its moral value for the family is against them.

In the single homestead, as in the settlement of which it is the elementary cell and the structural epitome, Tale social organization has three fundamental aspects—material, associational, and moral. They represent the three major kinds of interests and ends that govern Tale social life. And though all forms of social relations among the Tallensi always have these three classes of components, they do not always work in harmony with one another.

In the homestead, as in the settlement, social relations move in two planes: the plane of lineage relations, in which the canon of agnatic descent dominates corporate action and directs individual conduct, and the plane of domestic relations, in which the bonds of marriage and parenthood, and the bilateral ties of kinship in the narrowest sense, control the behaviour of people towards one another. The persons who form a unit in one plane fall into separate, opposed units in the other. Husband and wife belong to mutually exclusive lineages; brothers by the same father but different mothers belong to separate matricentral segments of the family and are nuclei of independent conjugal families.

The Ideas and Values embodied in the Homestead

It is far truer of the Talɔŋ than of the modern Englishman to say that his home is his castle, though not as literally as Cardinall imagines. The natives of these parts, he declares, build their homesteads solidly and a bow-shot apart in order the better to defend them against hostile neighbours.[1] This romantic explanation, however, has

[1] Cardinall, A. W., *Natives of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast*, pp. 2, 14.

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
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593 cause of such brawls is women. A man sees a man of another clan
602 talking to the wife of a member of his inner or medial lineage—or
579 even to the wife of a distant clansman of his. He suspects the couple of plotting the woman's abduction and accuses them of this. In a few minutes clansmen of the two disputants who happen to be near come to their support; and so a brawl may ensue.

593 But where the ideal of the equality and solidarity of siblings is most
476 apparent in social relations outside the inner lineage, is in the institu-
764 tionalized co-operation of lineages and lineage segments. It is most conspicuous in important ceremonial and ritual matters such as funerals or changes in the custody of lineage shrines. But it emerges also in jural affairs such as marriage transactions and reconciliation ceremonies. The maxim 'Brothers look after one's affairs (*Sunzɔp mmaan ycla*)' sums this up for the native. Thus, as we have described in our previous book,[1] at funeral ceremonies all the *sunzɔ* lineages of the group celebrating the funeral are bound to be present, and it is the representatives of these lineages that supervise and mostly take the lead in the various rites. When Kpe'emi died, the messengers bearing the sad tidings did not go straight home to his father. They went first to an elder of a different section (*yizug*) of the clan; he took them to the head of a segment of Kpe'emi's section different from that to which Kpe'emi belonged; and this man took them to the head of Kpe'emi's segment, who conducted them to Kpe'emi's father. Thus the blow was softened by the presence, the condolences, and the immediate ritual action of *sunzɔp* of different degrees. Similarly, if a man seduces a clansman's [837] wife, he appeals not to his own immediate lineage head but to the head of an inner or medial lineage closely related to his to intercede on his behalf. The reciprocal of these and similar acts of assistance given to *sunzɔp* is the strictly defined rights of *sunzɔp* lineages to certain shares of sacrificial or ceremonial meat, beer, flour, and so forth. But the Tallensi do not regard these rights as rewards for 'looking after' the affairs of a *sunzɔ*. The rights and the duties coexist as equally essential features of the relationship of 'brother' lineages.

593 As these examples show, there are, in fact, no person-to-person social
● 571 relations between individuals who are only clan-siblings of the same
835 quality as sibling relations in the narrow sense. Their solidarity is a consequence of the general solidarity of the clan in situations affecting the common interest. Thus clan-brothers have no property relations *qua* clansmen. But the chief distinction between clan and inner lineage siblings lies in the sphere of sex. As we are aware, sexual relations with clan sisters outside the medial lineage are not regarded as disgraceful, and to have sexual relations with a distant clansman's wife is considered to be adultery, not incest. Tallensi, thinking of these matters in their inveterate socio-spatial terminology, say that clan siblings are 'too far'

[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, pp. 215 ff.

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
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to be treated as real siblings and 'too close' to be treated as if they were non-clansfolk in these matters. So one cannot marry a clan-sister but may have sexual relations with her, and one cannot abduct a clansman's wife, but to seduce her is not a sin. That adultery with a clansman's wife is very rare and is vehemently reprobated is a sign of the strength of clan solidarity, not of the strength of the sibling tie between clansmen.

A further point of significance is that whereas competition between brothers of the same inner lineage for wives or for politico-ritual office is held to be improper, distant clan-brothers may and do compete. No self-respecting youth would court a girl whom his brother of the same inner lineage is seeking in marriage unless it be on his brother's behalf; but it is a very common thing for several young men of the same maximal lineage or clan to court the same girl in friendly rivalry. Again, Tallensi say that until very recently, when the white man's criteria of suitability for a chiefship superseded the traditional standards, two men of the same inner lineage would never or very rarely compete for a vacant chiefship.[1] In the past, if a chiefship fell vacant, it was generally the oldest men of the clan, heads of at least medial lineages, who competed for it. Speaking of these matters Tallensi say: 'A man and his brother[2] do not like each other (*nit ni u mabiiga pu boot taaba*).' To win a chiefship, they assert, a man will not hesitate to resort secretly to medicine shrines, or to make extravagant promises to his ancestor shrines and the Earth, in order to compass the defeat of his rivals.

The Social Equivalence of Siblings Reconsidered

The solidarity and equality of siblings is a reflex of their social equivalence, but these do not mean the same thing. Equality exists between siblings; their social equivalence lies in their relations with the community at large, as has already been indicated. Many features of the configuration of sentiment and conduct we have analysed in the preceding pages acquire a new shade of meaning if we recognize them as indices of the social equivalence of siblings as well as being expressions of their equality.

Siblings are socially equivalent by reason of their genealogical identity, in whole, as between full (uterine, i.e. *soog*) siblings, or in part, as between patrilineal siblings. There are degrees of social equivalence corresponding to degrees of genealogical identity; so that *soog* siblings are more nearly equivalent than half-siblings and half-siblings than ortho-cousins, and so on.

In regard to their social roles, their rights, and their duties, wherever these are determined by descent, siblings are therefore the more closely identified the nearer they are to one another genealogically, and that

[1] A chiefship is always vested in a particular clan or maximal lineage. Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, ch. iv.

[2] A 'brother' of a different medial lineage is meant here.

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
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ritually 'pegged (*ba'*)'—fastened to life, as it were—and is henceforth regarded as human. But whether either or both of the twins survive, the parents have to undergo a course of ritual purification after their birth. This is believed to act as a magical safeguard against the recurrence of such a misfortune besides cleansing them of the ill luck that has occurred.

In spite of this mystical background, twins that survive are regarded and treated as ordinary human beings. But there is one point on which very great stress is laid. Twins must be treated exactly alike by their parents. 'If you give one a portion of porridge you must give the other an equal portion; if you give one a penny you must give the other a penny', said one informant. If they are brothers, they will live together all their lives. If they are sisters they must be married to the same settlement[1] or to adjacent and interlinked settlements. For it is as if they are one person and yet are two. They are completely equal, completely equivalent siblings; and if they are not so treated, *ba ku nye zomma*, things will not turn out well for them.

Rights and duties become important in adulthood, when they are actively claimed and discharged; and it is in the social relations of adults that the equivalence of siblings becomes conspicuous. It is best exemplified in three institutions, the levirate, the rules of inheritance and succession, and the extension of patrilineal, matrilateral, and sororal kinship ties. We have dealt with various aspects of these subjects in preceding chapters. Brief recapitulation with reference to the present context is all that is needed here. The kinship aspect comes up again in the following chapter. But before we look again at the levirate and at the rules of inheritance, it is worth noting some of the minor indications of the equivalence of siblings.

There is, firstly, the idea that the bride-price received for a girl should be earmarked for the payment of the bride-price for the wife of her closest brother. This convention is not strictly upheld, for the deciding

artificial feeding is unknown to the Tallensi. During our stay among them two pairs of twins and a set of triplets (who are treated in exactly the same way as twins) were born to people known personally to my wife and me. Even to a layman's eye it was obvious that the triplets were doomed from the first, both because they were so puny and because the mother was so utterly exhausted. Of the two pairs of twins, only one child survived the first few weeks of life, and this child, when last heard of, did not seem to have a very good chance of reaching childhood. I do not know what the incidence of twin births is among the Tallensi. The best-known owner of twin medicine at Tongo told me he had had five cases during the past two years or so and of these only one child was still alive. I knew only one pair of living twins, aged about 7 or 8, among all the children—easily running into three figures—whom my wife and I got to know throughout Taleland. Single survivors of twins are more common and I knew four. Thus the native view of the high mortality of twins appears to be justified by the facts.

[1] They are, of course, not a pair of successive sisters, so the concept of *nyaar* (*v. supra*, p. 253) does not apply.

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voice in the disposal of bride-price payments always lies with the head of the joint family. He has to strike a balance between the different claims that have to be met; but other things being equal he will earmark at least a portion of a daughter's bride-price for her *soog* brother's use in espousing a wife, or if he has a wife, her nearest *sunzɔ* brother. Tallensi say that a self-respecting man should be specially scrupulous in this matter with his proxy children, but that sometimes proxy fathers are not. I have known elders of the inner lineage put pressure on a man to abide by the rule. Thus one of the grouses Sinkawol had against his proxy father Tiezien was that the latter had refused to part with cattle received for Sinkawol's *soog* sister in order to secure a second wife for Sinkawol or his *soog* brother. By contrast, one of the few things in favour of Na'abzɔ was that he allowed his proxy son Siŋ (who was farming on his own) to keep the money received in payment of Siŋ's half-sister's bride-price, against the day when Siŋ would need it himself to pay bride-price. Siŋ, incidentally, prudently handed over the money for safe-keeping to a friend, lest he himself should be tempted to fritter it away in meeting petty needs, or, worse still, lest Na'abzɔ should suddenly demand it for the payment of some debt that had meanwhile become urgent. This convention, in short, represents not a right to a sister's bride-price but an acknowledgement of the social equivalence of siblings.

Conventionalized joking between a man and his wife's siblings (in the widest classificatory sense of all her clan-siblings), and of a woman with her husband's sisters and his more distant clansmen, is another indication of the social equivalence of siblings. We have discussed this before and need only draw attention here to the associated custom by which a man is allowed to sleep with a wife's unmarried sister who comes on a visit. It is very difficult to ascertain how far this custom is actually practised. Men say it was commoner in the old days when girls were not married off, as they often are now, before puberty, but at a somewhat later age. None of the men I knew best claimed to have slept with a sister-in-law; but several said they had 'played' (*deem*)—a euphemism for flirtation ending in stealthy sex relations—with visiting sisters-in-law of one of their near clansmen. At the same time, in joking with a sister-in-law or talking about a sister-in-law men always emphasize this custom, as if it were an unchallengeable right.

Another illustration associated with the joking relationship between siblings-in-law is the terminology used between them. A man's sisters speak of his wife—and sometimes address her, half jokingly—as 'our wife (*ti poya*)' and the wife uses the reciprocal term 'husband' (*set*) in the same way of them. I once heard a girl of about 9 address her sister-in-law thus. Pretending ignorance, I asked her why she did so. 'Our wife (she is)', came the answer, with a gesture of disdain that amused the wife, 'Have we not given cows for her?'

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In ritual activities the social equivalence of siblings is constantly apparent, and in its most flexible form. For example, in almost every one of the elaborate series of rites that make up funeral ceremonies certain duties fall on particular kin of the dead person. A typical instance is the cooking of 'sisters-in-law porridge (*pɔɣakiis saɣabo*)', one of the inaugural rites of every funeral. Two 'wives' and a 'daughter' of the clan together cook porridge in a prescribed ritual fashion. Usually the rite is performed by daughters and wives of the inner lineage that is celebrating the funeral, but any daughter of the clan and any wife of the clan can serve. The rite ends with a 'sister's son (*ahɔŋ*)' pretending to whip the women who cook the porridge with a twig. As there is not always a true sister's son present, a member of the clan has to act instead. There is never any difficulty in finding somebody who is qualified to do so. By going back far enough almost anybody can trace a matrilateral link with his own clan and can therefore act as a 'sister's son' for the purpose of the rite. Thus at Saɣawuob's mother's funeral Latarəg acted as 'sister's son'. His father's mother's mother had been a daughter of the clan section to which Saɣawuob belongs and that made him a classificatory 'sister's son' for purposes of this rite. A double identification lies behind such assimilations of remote to near kin. There is the lateral identification of any daughter of the clan with any other daughter of the clan, living or dead; and there is the vertical identification of a person with any of his ancestors in certain situations.

A somewhat different illustration is the following. We have seen, in our earlier book,[1] how the genealogical equality ('but for the accident of birth') of women members of the lineage and clan with their brothers is recognized both in secular and in ritual custom. Among all the daughters of a lineage—from the minimal to the maximal span, as it emerges in a particular context—the oldest of them, the *pɔɣayabolɣ-kpɛɣ*, has special prestige. She stands for the genealogical equality of women and men in the lineage. She has a kind of honorary equality with the male head of the lineage. She has no authority in lineage affairs; but if she happens to be present when they are being discussed she may speak her mind freely and will be listened to with respect. In the case of the senior daughter of a medial or lesser lineage, she has the right to be informed in advance of every important ceremonial event in the lineage. If she attends, she is entitled to a special portion of the sacrificial meat usually allocated to the daughters—the backbone, upper ribs, and intestines. But there is a curious custom which shows her symbolic equivalence with her brother, the lineage head, best. She may never sleep under the same roof with him, even if he is her own full brother. If she did, one of them would die. There is a feeling that in the eyes of the ancestors the oldest male and oldest woman of a lineage are so nearly equivalent that the latter could easily replace the

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 52 and ch. ix.

3: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1949
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ahsi, representing perhaps five or six clans, over the division of the cow's neck amongst themselves. It is on such occasions that the *ahsi* divide into two groups, the *dugni ahsi*, who are sisters' sons of the inner lineage responsible for the ceremony, and the *yeyha* (outside) *ahsi*, whose matrilateral links are with other segments of the clan. Etiquette dictates that the choicest and largest part of the meat apportioned to the *ahsi* should be given to the 'outside *ahsi*'. The *dugni ahsi*, it is argued, have many more opportunities of attending ceremonies of this inner lineage and receiving their shares of the sacrificial meat.

There are certain ceremonial occasions on which sisters' children of all degrees usually turn up in large numbers.[1] They include not only *ahsi* of the lineage immediately responsible for the ceremony but also remote *ahsi* and 'grandsons (*yaasi*)' of the clan. The death of a senior elder or of the holder of a politico-ritual office brings 'sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' from a wide range to the funeral. They are present at all stages of the funeral, but the largest number usually come on the day of the burial, on the day the funeral proper (as opposed to the burial rites) commences, and on the two occasions when a diviner is consulted to ascertain the mystical author of the death. These are all occasions when animals are slaughtered as offerings and tributes to the dead, or else food or beer is used in the rites and shared amongst all present. The meat and the drink form a big attraction to all who have kinship ties with the lineage celebrating the funeral. It is no mean attraction either, considering that at a big funeral, such as that of the head of a section (*yizug*) of a clan or of a maximal lineage, two or three big beasts (cows and donkeys) and from twenty to forty small stock (sheep and goats) will be slaughtered, not to speak of innumerable fowls. In addition there will be great quantities of porridge and other cooked food. And *ahsi* have prescribed shares of all these items. Similar prodigality is shown in the brewing of beer for a big funeral.

But greed is far from being the chief motive that brings matrilateral and sororal kin to an important funeral. The profusion of food and beer—both of which are distributed only on specific ritual occasions—serves chiefly to create and maintain the right atmosphere of pride and kinship amity. For it must be remembered that most of the 'sisters' sons' will bring a gift, if it is only a meagre chicken and a small basket of grain; and if there are twenty or thirty 'sisters' sons' present the share of meat and beer each will receive is of less value than the things he brings.

A 'sister's son' or a 'grandson', like everybody else who attends such

[1] As these ceremonies are almost always conducted by men and belong to the ritual and jural spheres of activity dominated by the men, the *ahsi* who come are principally males; but often one or two female *ahsi* come as well. The neck of the animal sacrificed belongs in theory to the *ahsi* of both sexes, but I have never seen it given to a woman.

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604 764 571 funerals, comes because of the social importance of the occasion. The funeral of a section or maximal lineage head is of exceptional public interest. It marks the end of a phase of lineage history and the beginning of a new phase, involving realinements in the social relations of many people and probably of all segments of the clan. That is why every branch of the dead man's clan, representatives of related clans, and many matrilateral and soreral kinsmen come to take part in the funeral.

63 571 602 782 For similar reasons the ceremony by which the *bɔyar* of a lineage of a high order, such as a medial lineage or a maximal lineage, is formally taken over—'inherited (*naa*)', as the natives put it—by a new lineage head is also attended by many 'sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' of the lineage and the clan. This ceremony marks the re-establishment of the structural equilibrium of the lineage around a new lineage head after its temporary disturbance by the death of the previous lineage head. It is an event of special importance for reaffirming the bonds of lineage solidarity and of kinship amity—for renewing, in the presence of their founding ancestors, the covenants of clanship and of kinship. All the males of the lineage, including the small boys, and representatives of all the other segments of the clan attend; and extra-clan kinsfolk from far and wide are present. I have counted as many as thirty, ranging from the full sister's son of the new lineage head to a distant 'sister's son', whose matrilateral ties with the clan went back to the founding ancestor of his maximal lineage, at such a gathering. Though it is a festive occasion, the attraction of food and drink is unquestionably of minor significance. Only two or three sheep, at most, are sacrificed, in addition to a large number of fowls; but every adult who attends is expected to bring a fowl to be offered to the *bɔyar* on his behalf. 'Sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' take special pride in offering their fowls, for this is the essence of the sacrament. An atmosphere of great goodwill and fellowship prevails, suffusing the most solemn moments of the sacrifice itself.

793 602 It is very much the same with the installation ceremonies of a newly appointed tendaana or other holder of a politico-ritual office. Extra-clan kin, clansmen, representatives of linked clans and of ritually associated clans, all come in great numbers to the ceremonies, bringing fowls, dishes of cooked food, baskets of grain and of ground-nuts, and other voluntary gifts to congratulate the new chief or tendaana and to testify to their kinship bonds with him and his clan. These ceremonies are, in effect, simply an elaboration of the ceremony of 'inheriting' a lineage *bɔyar*. Their significance is the same, but in a heightened degree, corresponding with the wider social sphere to which they refer. 'Sisters' sons' and 'grandsons' closely related to the new chief or tendaana are as proud of his elevation in status as are his close agnates.

604 769 776 This is one aspect of a man's ritual relations with his 'sisters' sons'

5: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937)1938 FE11 Tallensi FE11

commits a *faux pas*, or shows lack of understanding, or misbehaves morally the comment is *u ka yam*, 'he has no sense'. The concept is used to refer both to qualities of personality and to attributes of behaviour. It is applied also in a genetic sense to describe the social development of the child. A normal child between the ages of about 6 and 9 years is said to 'have sense at length'. It knows how to behave in the social situations which confront it, whereas an infant of 3 or 4 years old does not. Yet a 4-year-old having learned bladder and bowel control is said to 'have sense' as compared with a 2-year-old. Similarly Nindoyat, (17–18 years) telling me of his sweethearting, waxed scornful about his own boyish friendship with girls two years before. 'I still had no sense then', he explained. The concept, it will be seen, is generally used relatively to a particular situation.

Children's attitude to education. In Tale society every pupil becomes in some situations a teacher. At the one extreme there are specialized ritual performances which some men do not learn till they are grey, and at the other, the toddler leaning over to play with his nursling brother is teaching the latter something about his environment. This holds right through the age-scale. Considering also the unity of the social sphere, one is not surprised to find that children have the same attitudes about education as their elders. Hence children are rarely unwilling to learn. As a rule, too, they are not ashamed of confessing failure, ignorance, or inability to do or make something. Conversely, children laugh good-humouredly at one another's deficiencies in skill or knowledge, they never jeer. Ridicule is reserved for the correction of uncouth manners, disgraceful morals, or aberrant interests.

Fundamental educational relationships. It will be evident from the preceding analysis that Tale children receive their education not only from the adults but also from older children and adolescents who are always transmitting what they know of the cultural heritage to their younger brothers and sisters and cousins. From the age of 5 or 6 years until they become fully absorbed into the economic system children often go about in small groups. These groups[1] usually consist of

[1] See M. Fortes, 'Kinship, Incest and Exogamy in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast', in *Custom is King*, 1936, for ancillary information about these groups. Also M. and S. L. Fortes, 'Food in the Domestic Economy of the Tallensi', *Africa*, IX, 1936, for an outline of their structural context.

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571 861 siblings, half-siblings, and ortho-cousins of close agnatic kinship from the same joint family or sublineage group. The composition of a children's group depends upon various factors. The most important of these are the following:

561 857 *Age and mobility.* Infants still requiring care are often carried about by boys and girls attached to a group of older children. Generally speaking, children of the same degree of mobility tend to go about together. Thus one often finds a group comprising children of about 6 to 10 years. But the stage of social development reached by a child is important in this connexion. Hence young children under 10–11, children between 10–11 and the beginning of pubescence, and adolescents all tend to form separate-groups.

571 857 462 *Sex.* Before the age of about 6 years small boys very frequently go about with girls' groups, and small girls, though more rarely, accompany older brothers. After that age as mobility increases and interests diverge the sexes tend to separate. A well-defined sexual dichotomy runs through Tale social life and thought, and the children begin to adopt the cultural definitions of the roles of the sexes in relation to each other about the time that single-sex groups become common. This is associated with a differentiation of their activities on the periphery of the economic system. Thus cowherds are always boys, whereas it is the girls who help with the housekeeping.

571 857 *The social situation.* Yet none of these children's groups resemble gangs. They have no permanent structure. They generally crystallize out in particular situations and the composition of a group depends largely upon the situation. In ritual situations one often finds a somewhat amorphous group of children and young people of a wide age-range. In games and imaginative play, however, it is more usual to meet with small groups of restricted age-range. Pairs and trios of either sex and of nearly the same age, who are almost always siblings or ortho-cousins, often have a more lasting companionship in work and play and provide a nucleus for larger temporary groups, especially in the dry season.

593 861 858 The most fundamental educational relationship of the Tallensi is, however, not that of children to children but of children to parents. It is a complex relationship, as defined in Tale culture, but its principal moments can be readily discerned. On the plane of rational, everyday

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226 227 The technique of fishing is simple. The men move to and fro all the time in the centre of the pool: the women form an irregular circle round the men and keep to the shallow periphery. Men use hand nets (*wɔk*) suspended from a single, strong withe bent in a roughly elliptical hoop, about 18 in. by 8 in. They scoop at random. If a fish is netted a quick twist of the wrist secures it in the bottom of the net, where it is dispatched with blows of an axe-shaft or the fist, and then hung from the man's waist on a string threaded through the gill cleft. Large nets (*pal*) of similar pattern, 8 or 9 feet long and manipulated by two men, are also employed, but the proportion of these is extremely small. Women use a heavy, beehive-shaped plunge basket (*zɔyur*) about 2 feet high made of withes lashed together about 2 inches apart at the open end of the trap. At the top of the trap a circular aperture four inches or so in diameter is left, while the bottom, open end is about twenty-seven inches across. The women plunge this down on to the bed of the river every few minutes and insert a hand through the top aperture to extract the fish. Their catch goes into a small basket slung from a shoulder. Whereas men often land a big fish, women seldom catch anything above the size of a large herring. The natives explain this by pointing out that the biggest fish will naturally seek the deeper water in the centre of the pool, which is occupied by the men. Only fish escaping to the periphery will come the women's way.

226 ● 571 The manual skill involved is however of secondary significance. Sociologically, the essential fact is that fishing is a group activity. Everybody fishes with and against his neighbour, his motor alertness and competitive cupidity at the highest. The excitement is indescribable. The glint of a fin through the water, brown with the mud churned up by the slow moving mass of men, causes a scrimmage. Pushing and shouting, a dozen men plunge their nets after the fish. In a well stocked pool the terrified fish leap out of the water, a fantastic and beautiful sight. Hands and nets swing out after the leaping fish, and the older men who remain on the bank watching call out with eager delight at the sight. The first catch of the day is greeted with a shout of pleasure, not very welcome to the fortunate fisherman, however, for the fish thus noticed cannot escape confiscation by the owner of the pool, as it is the ritual perquisite of the fetish.

226 578 579 Disputes are inevitable and may become violent. The rule is that a fish belongs to the person who nets or traps it. But a fish may be netted by one man, escape, and be at once netted by another, or a leaping fish may be pinned between two nets. Such incidents lead to an angry altercation in which the one who has the fish generally gets the better. Once a quarrel over a fish occurred between a man of the *Namoos* group and one of the *Tallis* group. The latter ran ashore with his fish followed by the *Namoos* claimant. In a few minutes a small riot had broken out. *Namoos* and *Tallis* rushed out, snatched sticks, branches of trees, fishing nets, and flew at each other. Only the intervention of a brother of the Chief of Tongo stopped what might have become a serious fight. The dispute over the fish in this case was the signal for an outburst of political hostility. Words quickly lead to blows in such an atmosphere of heightened muscular and emotional tension.